

a.) REMARKS

In the outstanding Office Action, the Examiner required that Applicants elect for prosecution one of the inventions of:

Group I (Claims 1-11 and 28-30), drawn to a preventing or treating agent for arthritis which comprises a plant belonging to the genus *Hydrangea* or an extract of the plant and amino sugar or a salt thereof and/or glycosaminoglycan or a salt thereof as active ingredients; or

Group II (Claims 18-22 and 31), drawn to a preventing or treating method for arthritis which comprises administering a plant belonging to the genus *Hydrangea* or an extract of the plant and amino sugar or salt thereof and/or glycosaminoglycan or a salt thereof.

In response, Applicants hereby elect to prosecute the invention of Group I, namely Claims 1-11 and 28-30.

The Examiner is further requiring Applicants select a single species (i.e., (i) a particular species of *Hydrangea* and (ii) a particular amino sugar and/or glycosaminoglycan) to which the claims shall be restricted if no generic claim is finally held to be allowable. In response, Applicants hereby select the species of: *Hydrangea macrophylla* Seringe var. *Thunbergii* Makino, glucosamine and chondroitin sulfate.

The claims readable on the elected species are claims 1-11 and 28-30.

Entry hereof is earnestly solicited.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

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